



SGT Michael Bracken

## ◀ 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION RE-UP

Mosul, Iraq

More than 150 soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division raised their right hands as they took their re-enlistment oaths during an Independence Day celebration at a former Saddam Hussein palace where the division main element was located.

## HONORING THE FALLEN ▶

Fort Stewart, Ga.

“FOREVER more these soldiers will be remembered and most of all they will always be here, marching in every formation on the field of honor. They will be in attendance at our most important events. They will not be forgotten,” said COL Gerald J. Poltorak during a ceremony honoring the 34 soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division killed in action during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Thirty-four trees were planted to honor the soldiers. A granite marker in front of each tree carries the soldier’s rank, name and the words “Iraqi Freedom.” The area where the trees were planted will be known as Warriors Walk.

The division’s soldiers were prepared when called to deploy to Kuwait, Poltorak said. Later the division struck deep into the heart of Iraq, straight to Baghdad, fighting its way in tough conditions, through the Iraqi army, Republican Guard, Fedayeen fighters and anyone else who stood in its way.

During the ceremony CSM Carl T. Smith, installation com-



SPC Jonathan Stack

mand sergeant major, read the names of the 34 soldiers. After each name a soldier guarding the marker removed a veil made of desert camouflage material with the soldier’s rank and 3rd Inf. Div. patch sewn on it.

“Those killed and injured were from units throughout the division,” Poltorak said.

“They were young troopers and old soldiers, private to captain to chief warrant officer 4. Single soldiers and married soldiers, some with large families and some with small, died and were wounded for their country and its values,” he said. “They fought for their units and most of all for the soldiers standing next to them.”

— SPC Jonathan M. Stack, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

## “MAIL CALL” GOES TO IRAQ ►

### Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

**E**VEN before Operation Iraqi Freedom can be declared history, the History Channel’s Lee Ermeý brought his show “Mail Call” to OIF’s theater of operations to show the public the military’s mission through Ermeý’s unique and patriotic lens.

Ermeý, memorable for his performance as Gunnery Sgt. Hartman, a Marine drill instructor in the movie “Full Metal Jacket,” interviewed service members for his show about military life and operations, and entertained troops with his unabashedly conservative humor.

Ermeý, aka “Gunney,” was in the OIF theater for about 10 days, traveling north to Tallil Air Base in Iraq and several points between, talking with soldiers, sailors, airman, Coast Guard members and especially his beloved marines.

Ermeý had lunch at a chow hall at Arifjan, and then entertained diners with 10 minutes of jokes and observations. He also told the troops about his mission to tell America what a great job they were doing in Iraq.

Ermeý interviewed COL Carl Cartwright, Logistics Support Element Commander, Army Materiel Command, Southwest Asia, about the 18,000 pieces of equipment AMC has dispensed in theater. During the interview Ermeý demonstrated his vast knowledge of the military by speaking without a script about the AMC mission for OIF.

Ermeý stood for dozens of pictures with troops, then took a ride with the Navy SEALs in a rigid inflatable boat. While his Mail Call crew filmed the event, Ermeý interviewed the boat crew as they zipped over the water and took a few hairpin turns at high speed.

— SSG Thomas Orme, 3rd Personnel Command Public Affairs Office



SSG Thomas Orme

## GUARD SOLDIERS DRILL FOR WATER ►

### San Diego, Calif.

**“G**REAT training.” For soldiers from the Arizona National Guard’s 257th Engineer Detachment, these words summarized two weeks of well drilling in support of the Border Barrier Project, California’s long-term border-reinforcement mission.

The nine-man unit drilled a well along the California-Mexico border. The natural source of water will be used by Army Reserve and National Guard engineer units in construction projects.

“This water could be used for irrigation of new plants, for mixing concrete or for dust control along the patrolled border roads,” Cervantes said.

SFC Ben Coley, the detachment’s



SGT Jon Wilke

supervisor, called this mission a training opportunity of a lifetime. “Here, we actually get to start up the drill and do our job. At home, we can only set it up and go through the motions.”

Cervantes said he enjoyed “doing

something for San Diego, working with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Border Patrol, and working with the Guard units.”

— SGT Jon Wilke, 133rd Mobile PA Det.